

EL PASO, Texas — El Paso children at Crisis Center were the recipients of early Christmas presents on Dec. 3, 2005 as members of the Navy Reserve Yokosuka Unit delivered numerous bags of toys during their drill weekend.

“As a Reservist, it is part of our core value to commit to helping our country. We are supposed to be the example. One of the ways to do that is by getting involved in our communities,” said 3rd Class Petty Officer Leticia Alvarado of the Yokosuka Reserve unit.

The mission of the Child Crisis Center is to prevent child abuse or neglect and to support parents in the El Paso community. The Child Crisis Center is a nonprofit, nonsectarian agency, which provides an emergency home for infants and children of parents who are temporarily unable to cope with their responsibilities and who need relief while they resolve their personal problems. The Center is a place that many parents need in time of stress.

“Parents are going through crisis at different times in their lives. Many times it involves their children. One of them may be in the hospital, or they may find themselves homeless. We can help them with the assistance of organizations like

the Navy Reserve” said Cristina Aguilar, a childcare worker for the past eight years at the El Paso Child Crisis Center.

Once members of the El Paso Reserve unit decided to gather funds and buy toys during the holidays, Alvarado knew what needed to be done. “Our commanding officer challenged us about holiday community service projects. I had



heard about the Child Crisis Center before and decided to do something about it. These are circumstances that we can impact,” said Alvarado.

One of the Yokosuka Navy Reservists who decided to participate in this community service project was 3rd Class Petty Officer Julian Ramos.

“It was great doing something special for these little kids who are having a tough time. They’ve had their troubles and it was great bringing a little bit of joy to them. It’s

great for the Navy to do something special for our community,” said Ramos.

The Executive Officer of the El Paso Yokosuka Navy Reserve Unit, Lt. j.g. Jesus Rodriguez, was glad that his unit was able to make a difference in his community.

“It’s a great opportunity for people like us to give a hand to others less fortunate. Being in the military and being able to see other parts of the world, you see lots of poverty. In other countries, I have seen raw poverty. In the United States, we tend to do what we can to help others. Here we are always trying to do something to help. This is a good opportunity to learn from places like this - when others are in need,” said Rodriguez.

The Child Crisis Center of El Paso was established to prevent child abuse and neglect. In 1980, it became the first crisis nursery in the state of Texas. The Center is a crisis nursery and emergency shelter for children, newborn through age 12, who are victims of abuse and/or neglect, or who are at high risk for such abuse and/or neglect. It is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week to families in the El Paso community and surrounding area.

“If we can ease some of the pain of a child’s circumstance, that is the least we can do,” said the organizer of the event, Alvarado. **TNR**



LEFT:
Child smiles broadly when presented an expected Christmas present.